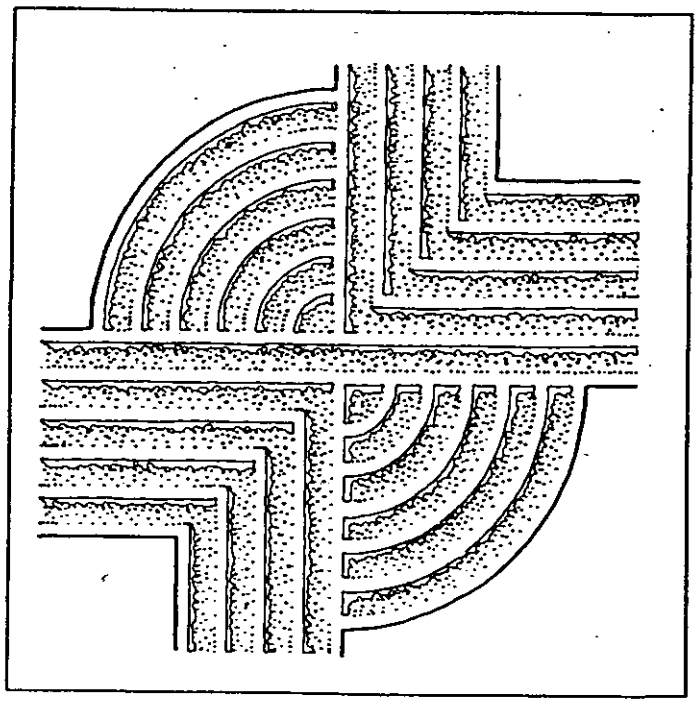
# ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY OF THE PROPOSED BEBBLE CREEK GOLF COURSE SITE, GREENVILLE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA



**RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION 91**

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY OF THE PROPOSED PEBBLE CREEK GOLF COURSE SITE, GREENVILLE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

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Chicora Research Contribution 91

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Introduction

Chicora Foundation was requested to submit a technical and budgetary proposal for "an archaeological reconnaissance level survey" of a 100 acre tract of land situated north of Greenville, near Paris Mountain State Park. Specifically, the study was to address:

- the project background, natural setting and environment resources, definitions, and assessment basis,
- description of investigative techniques, including literature review appropriate for a reconnaissance level investigation,
- an assessment of the project's potential impact on any identified cultural resources, and
- recommendations regarding the integrity and National Register eligibility of any identified sites.

Chicora Foundation provided Sabine & Waters with a technical and budgetary proposal, specifying the tasks involved in a reconnaissance level study, on August 27, 1992. The proposed work would consist of:

- a review of the S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology site files,
- coordination with the S.C. State Historic Preservation Office for any National Register sites or previous architectural surveys in the immediate area,
- an evaluation of historical records and resources available for use on the project,
- a brief historical overview of the project area, adequate to judge the historical importance of the area and any archaeological resources encountered,
- a pedestrian survey of the project area, with particular attention to open ground areas, including erosional zones, bald spots, road cuts, ditch banks, and similar areas,
- limited shovel testing in high probability areas (such as ridges overlooking creeks), and to note soil conditions,
- architectural recordation of any standing structures at least 50 years old, and
- a professional assessment of the probable significance of any identified sites and the probable impact to the sites by the proposed project, as suitable for a reconnaissance investigation.

This proposal was accepted by Sabine & Waters on August 31. The historical research was conducted by Dr. Michael Trinkley. The resources of the Thomas Cooper Map Repository and the South Caroliniana Library were used. Ms. Natalie Adams examined the site files of the S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology. A letter was hand delivered to the S.C. State Historic Preservation

Office, requesting information on National Register sites and previous architectural surveys.

The field investigations were undertaken by Ms. Natalie Adams on Monday, September 7, 1992. The laboratory processing of the resulting collections, curation preparations, and report production have taken place at Chicora Foundation's offices in Columbia on September 8-9, 1992.

It is important to clearly indicate that this study involves only a reconnaissance investigation of the 100 acres. No intensive investigation has been undertaken by Chicora Foundation and the methodology of this reconnaissance investigation was designed and implemented to address the specific questions posed by Sabine & Waters. More generally, it was designed to allow an assessment of the likelihood that ground disturbing activities in the project area might impact archaeological resources.

Project Area

The project area is located north of the city of Greenville, just west of S.C. 253 (Figure 1). The property is bounded to the east by S.C. 253, to the north by Batson (or State Park) Road, to the west by privately owned lots, and to the south by Mountain Creek.

Two creeks are located on the tract. Mountain Creek forms the southern boundary of the property. A smaller creek which feeds Mountain Creek at the southeast corner of the tract is located primarily in the central portion of the property. Its headwaters begin near the north central property boundary.

Two dirt roads were noted in the tract. One is an old overgrown remnant road

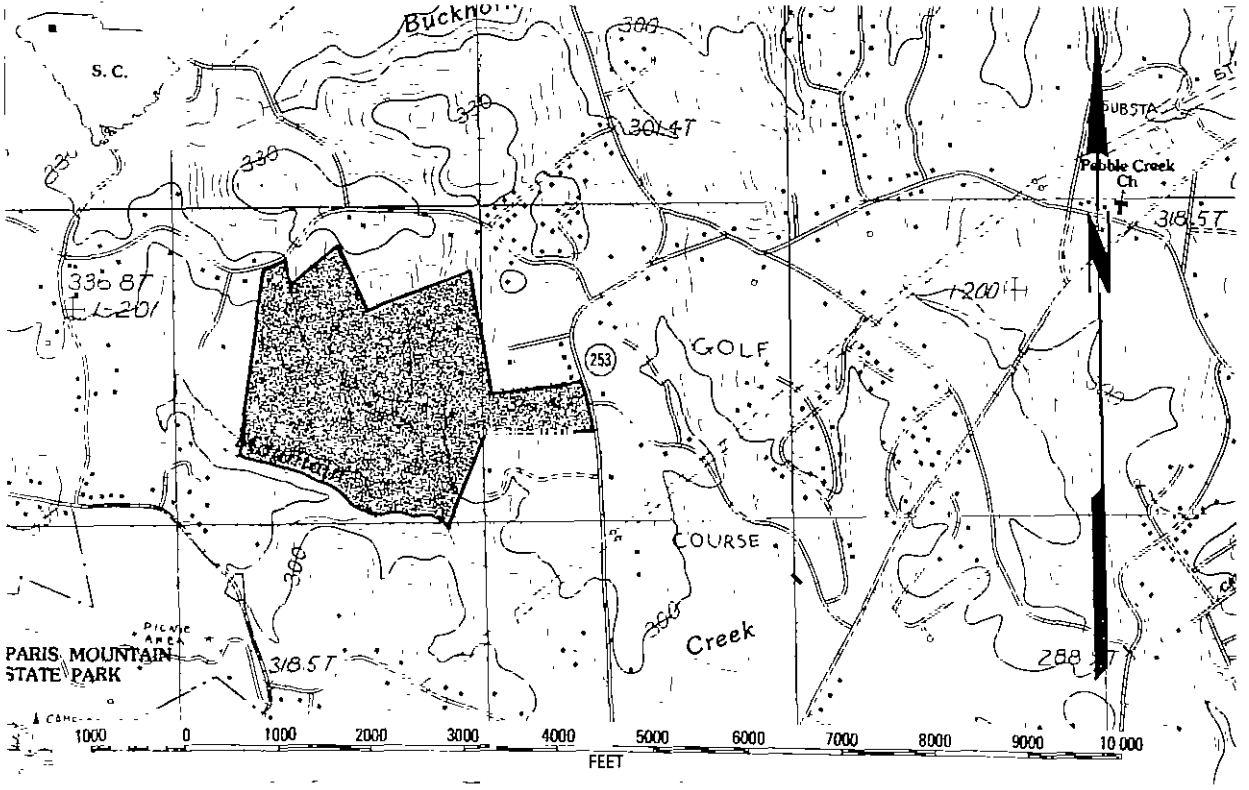


Figure 1. Location of project area on 1983 Taylors Quadrangle Map.

which runs from the northwest corner of the property, along a ridge line and ends at the ridge terminus. A creek which feeds Mountain Creek is just northeast of this ridge. A second, better maintained, dirt road is found northeast of the same un-named creek and ends at the corner of a fence line (Figure 2).

Vegetation within the project area consists of open mixed pine and hardwood forest. There is a light understory of vegetation throughout most of the tract.

Soils consist of Cecil sandy loam, Cecil clay loam, and Pacolet sandy loam. The Cecil sandy loam is well drained and found on ridgetops and in long areas adjacent to drainageways and small streams. The Cecil clay loams are found on irregularly shaped ridges, on narrow, irregular crests of ridges, and on sides slopes of drainageways. The Pacolet sandy loam is well drained and found adjacent to small streams. Moderately deep gullies are present in places (Camp 1975:13, 25).

Elevations in the project area range from 950 feet to 1089 feet above MSL. The lowest areas are located in gullies associated with streams, while the higher elevations are found on ridges primarily in the northwestern portion of the tract.

Effective Environment

Greenville County is bounded to the north by Transylvania, Henderson, and Polk Counties, North Carolina, to the west by Pickens and Anderson Counties and the Saluda River, to the south by Anderson and Laurens Counties, and to the east by Laurens and Spartanburg Counties.

The northern quarter of Greenville County is in the Blue Ridge Mountains, while the remaining portion is in the Piedmont Plateau. The land ranges from nearly level to very steep with the highest point being White Oak Mountain at 3,297 feet above sea level. In the central portion of the county, where the project area is located, the elevation ranges from 750 to 1,050 feet MSL. In the central portion, however, Paris and Roper Mountains rise above the surrounding area and do not conform to the general pattern of relief (Camp 1975).

The main streams in the county flow southeastward into the South Pacolet River. The major streams that drain the county are the North, Middle, and South Saluda, Reedy, Enoree, and South and Middle Tyger Rivers. Numerous smaller streams (such as Mountain Creek) are found throughout the county (Camp 1975). Mills noted in 1826:

> Greenville is finely watered, but has not the same advantages of navigation, with the lower district.... The stream promising the most favorable means for rectifying this deficiency, is the Reedy river, flowing through the middle of the district, and passing by the court house. It might, without great expense, be made use of, to feed a canal to communicate with Saluda river...; and by means of this river, under improvement by the state, a navigable intercourse may be had with Columbia and Charleston (Mills 1972: 573-574)

Vegetation in the Greenville County piedmont area falls within the Oak-Pine or Oak-Hickory-Pine region. Oak-Pine forests are transitional between the Oak-Hickory region to the northwest and the Southern Evergreen forest (Braun 1950). There are three phases of climax vegetation in the Piedmont upland hardwood forests of the Oak-Pine region, defined by vegetational shifts caused by variations in elevation, slope, soils, and moisture. These phases are termed Dry, Intermediate, and Rich. The Dry Phase occurs on thin rocky soils of high ridges and knolls and is dominated by post oak and blackjack oak, with sporadic occurrences of shortleaf pine, mockernut hickory, pignut hickory, pale hickory, persimmon, and black gum. The Intermediate Phase occurs primarily on broad slopes with deep soils and is dominated by white oak and post oak. The Rich Phase

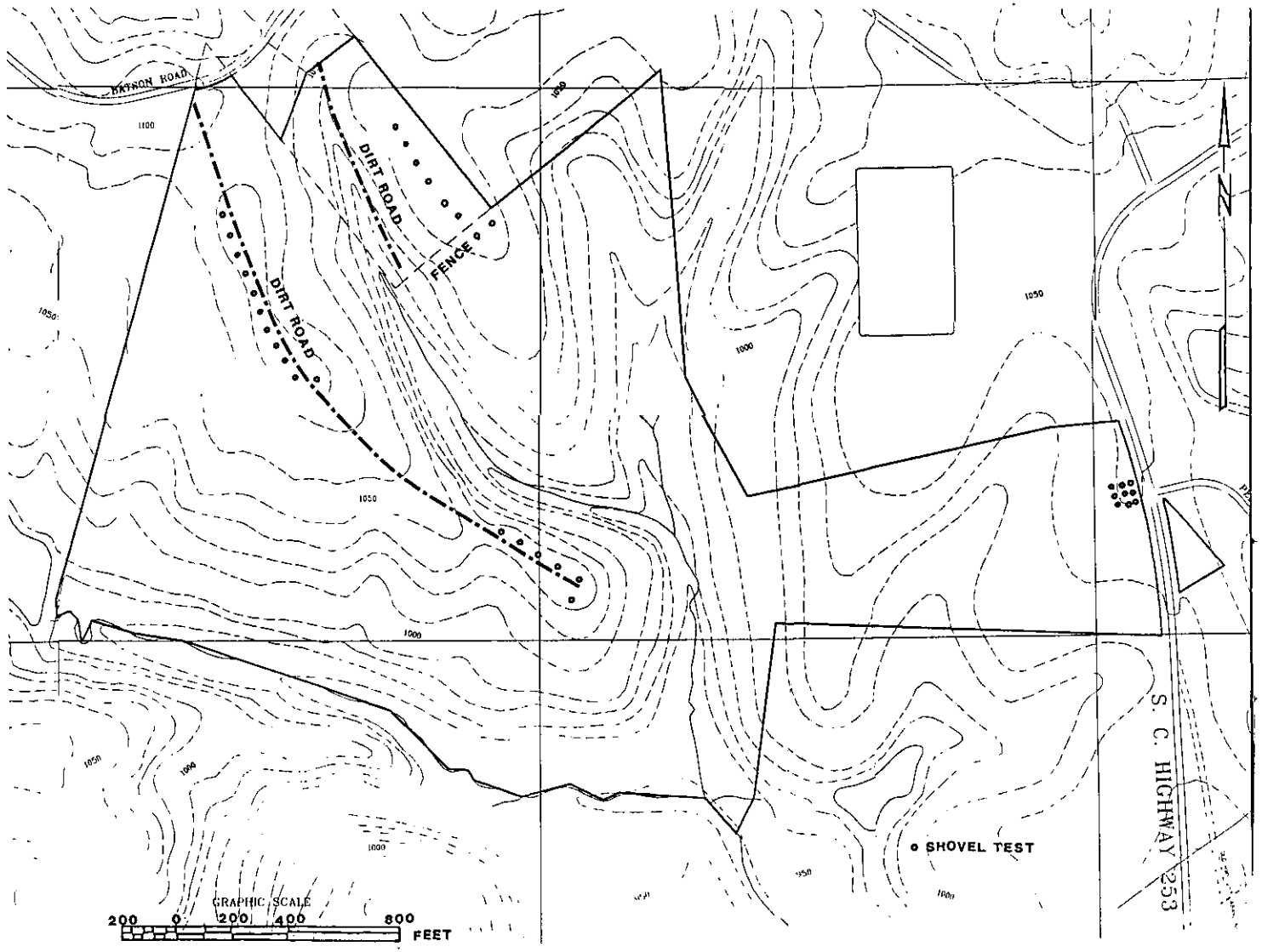


Figure 2. Location of study area showing roads, creeks, and shovel test locations.

occurs in cool, moist ravines and north-facing slopes. It is dominated by white, black, and red oaks. Also found are beech, tulip poplar, red maple, shagbark hickory, and sweetgum (Waggoner 1975).

There are eight geologic formations in Greenville County made up of alluvium, fine-grained rocks, fine-grained to medium-grained rocks, fine-grained to coarse-grained rocks, and coarse-grained rocks. Alluvium consists of material recently deposited on flood plains. The fine-grained rocks are diabase dikes that cut across formations of granite and gneiss. The fine-grained to medium-grained rocks are biotite gneiss, biotite schist, and megmatite. The fine-grained to coarse-grained rocks are biotite schist and hornblende gneiss. The medium-grained rocks are biotite granite gneiss and granite undivided. The coarse-grained rocks are muscovite pegmatite dikes (Camp 1975).

Climate in the region is temperate in that it is characterized by mild winters and warm summers. Mills described the climate as:

> one of the most delightful in the world. The lands are well drained, and the major part sufficiently far removed from the mountains, not to be affected by the vapors; yet near enough to partake of their refreshing coolness in the summer, and protection from the cold northern blasts in winter (Mills 1972: 575).

Snowfalls occur every winter, but significant amounts come only once every two or three years. Winter temperatures fall to 20°F or less on six days of the year. Summers are warm and long and have an average of 56 days when the temperatures rises to 90°F or higher. Because of the elevation, the maximum temperature seldom reaches 100°F. Precipitation is evenly distributed throughout the year. The average year produces about 70 days with one-tenth inch or more of rain. Annual rainfall varies from a high of 67 inches in 1929 to less than 32 inches in 1938. Normal annual precipitation is about 48 inches (Camp 1975).

Brief Prehistoric and Historic Synopsis

Regrettably little archaeological research has been conducted in Greenville County. In fact, of the 81 studies for Greenville listed by Derting et al. (1991), 74 or 91% are relatively minor surveys related to highway or sewer construction. Thirty three, or 45%, of these were written by one of the authors of this study (Michael Trinkley).

The Paleo-Indian period, lasting from 12,000 to 8,000 B.C., is evidenced by basally thinned, side-notched projectile points; fluted, lanceolate projectile points; side scrapers; end scrapers; and drills (Coe 1964; Michie 1977). The Paleo-Indian occupation, while widespread, does not appear to have been intensive. Points usually associated with this period include the Clovis and several variants, Suwannee, Simpson, and Dalton (Goodyear et al. 1989:36-38). At least two Paleo-Indian points have been found in the Greenville County area, both in the northwestern corner of the county (Goodyear et al. 1989:33).

Unfortunately, little is known about Paleo-Indian subsistence strategies, settlement systems, or social organization. Generally, archaeologists agree that the Paleo-Indian groups were at a band level of society, were nomadic, and were both hunters and foragers. While population density, based on the isolated finds, is thought to have been low, Walthall suggests that toward the end of the period, "there was an increase in population density and in territoriality and that a number of new resource areas were beginning to be exploited" (Walthall 1980:30).

The Archaic period, which dates from 8000 to 2000 B.C., does not form a sharp break with the Paleo-Indian period, but is a slow transition characterized by a modern climate and an increase in the diversity of material culture. The chronology established by Coe (1964) for the North Carolina Piedmont may be

applied with little modification to the Greenville County area. Archaic period assemblages, characterized by corner-notched, side-notched, and broad stemmed projectile points, are common in the vicinity, although they rarely are found in good, well-preserved contexts.

The Woodland period begins, by definition, with the introduction of fired clay pottery about 2000 B.C. along the South Carolina coast and much later in the Carolina Piedmont, about 500 B.C. It should be noted that many researchers call the period from about 2500 to 1000 B.C. the Late Archaic because of a perceived continuation of the Archaic lifestyle in spite of the manufacture of pottery. Regardless of terminology, the period from 2000 to 500 B.C. was a period of tremendous change. Much of the information development from the investigations of Richard B. Russell Reservoir is applicable to the Greenville area (see Anderson and Joseph 1988).

The subsistence economy during this early period was based primarily on deer hunting and fishing, with supplemental inclusions of small mammals, birds, reptiles, and shellfish. Various calculations of the probable yield of deer, fish, and other food sources identified from some coastal sites indicate that sedentary life was not only possible, but probable. Further inland it seems likely that many Native American groups continued the previous established patterns of band mobility. These frequent moves would allow the groups to take advantage of various seasonal resources, such as shad and sturgeon in the spring, nut masts in the fall, and turkeys during the winter.

The South Appalachian Mississippian period, from about A.D. 1100 to A.D. 1640 is the most elaborate level of culture attained by the native inhabitants and is followed by cultural disintegration brought about largely by European disease. The period is characterized by complicated stamped pottery, complex social organization, agriculture, and the construction of temple mounds and ceremonial centers. The Etowah, Savannah, and Lamar phases characterize this period from about A.D. 1200 to 1500.

The protohistoric and historic Native American remains most often associated with Greenville County, however, are those of the Cherokee. Pottery includes the Pigeon, Connestee, and Pisgah series associated with the gradual, in situ development of the Cherokee culture (Holden 1966, Egloff 1967, Moore 1986). The Cherokee archaeology of Greenville is briefly discussed by Beuschel (1976) and Harmon (1986).

Historical accounts of the territory encompassing the Piedmont began with the DeSoto expedition in 1540 (Swanton 1946). This area, referred to as the "Up Country" or "Back Country" interchangeably, was recognized by the Indians and the early settlers to be the hunting grounds of the Lower Cherokee (Logan 1859:6). In these early years the principal source of interaction between the European settlers and the Cherokee involved a loosely organized trading network (see also Harmon 1986).

After the establishment of South Carolina as a British province in 1670, organization and delineation into more manageable territorial units began. In 1685, the Proprietors sectioned the new province into four counties, although present Greenville County was set aside as Indian or Cherokee land. While a further refinement of boundaries in 1769 saw the creation of the Ninety Six District, it was not until the last decade of the eighteenth century that Greenville District was recognized.

The 1755 treaty between the Cherokee and Governor James Glen ceded nearly half of the territory of present South Carolina to the whites (Mills 1972:604). An early and sparse influx of settlers from the north was composed mainly of cattlemen and Indian traders. These semi-permanent settlements were concentrated along the streams and rivers where land was both productive and easily cleared. Cattlemen constructed temporary "cowpens" and planted small sections of corn,

grains, and produce for home consumption. Mills (1972:571-572) reports that one of the earliest settlers of Greenville was Richard Pearis or Paris. Pearis operated a trading post and grist mill on the Reedy River overlooking a 15-foot fall, near the present Citizens and Southern Bank on Camperdown Way in downtown Greenville (see also Building Conservation Technology 1981).

After the initial settlements of the 1750s the white population of the Up Country did not increase significantly until 1761, with the expulsion of the Native American population at the end of the Cherokee War. This created a second wave of immigration and settlement, spearheaded by farmers from the northern colonies of North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. These settlers developed a self-sufficient economy based on planting flax, tobacco, corn, wheat, and oats, and raising cattle and hogs for their own use. Slaves were relatively uncommon until the early 1800s.

In this early period of European settlement there was little connection with the legal authorities on the coast (i.e., Charleston), leaving the Up County largely autonomous. This led to the emergence of the Regulator Movement of the 1760s, a vigilante organization which attempted to maintain order and provide security through a system of courts and offices (Racine 1980:13). By the eve of the Revolution, two-thirds of the South Carolina population lived in the Up Country (Racine 1980:14).

By the onset of the American Revolution, the population of the Carolina Up Country was quite diverse in its ethnic, religious, and political backgrounds. These differences seemed to localize the hostilities between Whigs and Tories living side by side. Pearis, an avid Tory, lost his mill and home to Whig sympathizers, although the county saw relatively few skirmishes.

Though the end of the Revolutionary War brought few changes to the life of the Up Country farmers, a solid framework of social and political organization was beginning to emerge. In 1797 Lemuel J. Alston offered a 400 acre site for the Greenville County court house and the formal organization of the area began to be recognizable. The original village, called Pleasantburg, was largely an unsuccessful speculative venture on Alston's part. Embarrassed by the failed real estate venture and a political defeat, Alston sold his 11,000 acre holdings to Vardy McBee and left the area (Building Conservation Technology 1981:11). Virtually all of Greenville can be traced back to McBee's ownership during the early nineteenth century.

By 1826 Greenville was a thriving, if small, town:

> the village of Greenville . . . is beautifully situated on a plane, gently undulating. The Reedy river placidly leaves its southern borders previous to precipitating itself in a beautiful cascade, over an immense body of rocks [the site of Pearis' earlier mill]. The village is regularly laid out in squares, and is rapidly improving. It is the resort of much company in the summer, and several respectable and wealthy families have located themselves here on account of the salubrity of the climate. These have induced a degree of improvement, which promises to make Greenville one of the most considerable villages in the state. . . . The number of houses is about 70 . . . (Mills 1972:572-573; Figure 3).

The town continued to grow through the nineteenth century, having 500 residents in 1834 and about 1500 by 1850. The 1850s represented a decade of change. Furman University opened in 1851, the first railroad through Greenville was built in 1853, and during this time the South's largest carriage and wagon plant was constructed (Building Conservation Technology 1981).

Greenville County, by 1850, had 13,370 white inhabitants and 6,691 African American slaves, most operating the 1068 farms scattered across the county. There

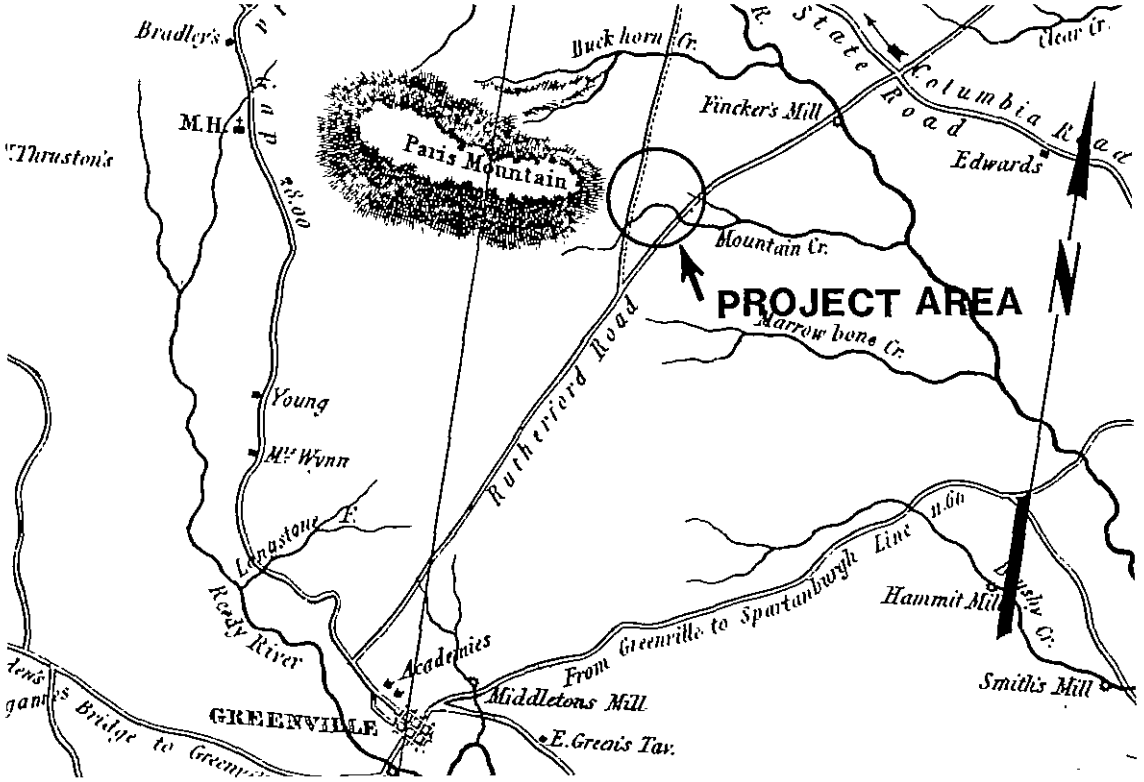


Figure 3. Mills Atlas, showing the project area in 1826.

were 130,727 acres of improved farm land, or about 122 acres per farm. This compares favorably with adjacent Spartanburg and is in excess of Pickens 78 improved acres per farm.

Lacking a consistently profitable staple crop, the Up Country concentrated on the production of subsistence crops until the early 1800s with the introduction of the cotton gin and the rise of English textile mills, the outgrowth of the industrial revolution. This early emphasis on food stuffs, while retarding upward mobility, had a lasting influence on the region, its economy, and its world view. Cotton spread quickly during the first decade of the 1800s and by 1811 the Up Country was exporting over 30 million pounds of short-staple cotton (Ford 1988:7). This cotton boom promoted tremendous growth in the region, a growth that even the yeomen farmers could participate in since it required little capital outlay and was subject to no particular economies of scale.

Examining the agricultural base of Greenville District, it is clear that the bulk of the farms produced subsistence, rather than cash, crops until the Civil War -- making Greenville unique in the region. While the county ranked seventh in the production of 11,074 bushels of rye and oats, it also ranked 26th in the production of cotton. Only Georgetown, Horry, and Pickens county produced fewer than the 2452 bales from Georgetown. The only significant cash crop produced by Greenville was tobacco. With 12,505 pounds reported, the county ranked third in tobacco production for 1850 (DeBow 1854). This continued a long tradition of tobacco cultivation, in spite of low yields, poor quality, and strong competition.

Ford, however, cautions against the easy trap of accepting the "dual-economy" hypothesis that views the Up Country as divided into planters raising cotton and yeoman farmers raising food stuffs. Ford notes:

> by and large, Upcountry yeomen were not forced to make an all-or-nothing choice between commercial agriculture and subsistence farming, or between traditional mores and market values. Instead Upcountry yeomen made a set of crop-mix decisions each year, balancing their need for a sure and steady food supply with their desire for cotton profits, a cash income, and a higher standard of living (Ford 1988:72).

There remained an uneasy peace between yeoman and plantation owner in the Up Country. In order to maintain the political support of the yeoman majority, planters were forced to moderate their economic and legal power, molding themselves to the community mores and opinion.

Ford argues that the Up Country actively participated in Secession because of the:

> "country-republican" ideal of personal independence, given particular fortification by the use of black slaves as a mud-sill class. Yeoman rose with planter to defend this ideal because it was not merely the planters' ideal, but his as well (Ford 1988:372).

The Civil War had little military impact on Greenville and no significant battles were fought in the County. It did, however, change Laurens' history, destroying the basis of its wealth and creating in its place a system of tenancy -- the hiring of farm laborers for a portion of the crop, a fixed amount of money, or both.

Immediately after the Civil War cotton prices peaked, causing many Southerners to plant cotton again, in the hope of recouping losses from the War. The single largest problem across the South, however, was labor. While some freedmen stayed on to work, others, apparently many others, left. An Englishman traveling through the South immediately after the war remarked that, "Thirty-seven thousand negroes, according to newspaper estimates, have left South Carolina already, traveling west" (quoted in Orser 1988:49).

The hiring of freedmen began immediately after the war, with variable results. The Freedmen's Bureau attempted to establish a system of wage labor, but the effort was largely tempered by the enactment of the Black Codes by the South Carolina Legislature in September 1865. These Codes allowed nominal freedom, while establishing a new kind of slavery, severely restricting the rights and freedoms of the black majority (see Orser 1988:50). Added to the Codes were oppressive contracts which reinforced the power of the plantation owner and degraded the freedom of the Blacks. The freedmen found power, however, in their ability to break their contracts and move to a new plantation, beginning a new contract. With the high price of cotton and the scarcity of labor, this mechanism caused tremendous agitation to the plantation owners.

Gradually owners turned away from wage labor contracts to two kinds of tenancy -- sharecropping and renting. While very different, both succeeded in making land ownership very difficult, if not impossible, for the vast majority of Blacks. Sharecropping required the tenant to pay his landlord part of the crop produced, while renting required that he pay a fixed rent in either crops or money. In sharecropping the tenant supplied the labor and one-half of the fertilizer, the landlord supplied everything else -- land, house, tools, work animals, animal feed, wood for fuel, and the other half of the needed fertilizer. In return the landlord received half of the crop at harvest. This system became known as "working on halves," and the tenants as "half hands," or "half tenants."

In share-renting, the landlord supplied the land, housing, and either one-quarter or one-third of the fertilizer costs. The tenant supplied the labor, animals, animal feed, tools, seed, and the remainder of the fertilizer. At harvest the crop was divided in proportion to the amount of fertilizer that each party supplied. A number of variations on this occurred, one of the most common being "third and fourth," where the landlord received one-fourth of the cotton crop and one-third of all other crops. In cash-renting the landlord provided the land and housing, with the renter providing everything else and paying a fixed per-acre rent in cash.

Between 1880 and 1925 the number of owner-operated farms in the Piedmont increased by 35.3%, while the number of cash renters increased by 375.4% and the number of sharecroppers increased by 155.8%. Moreover, 1880 was the only year between 1880 and 1925 during which a majority of Piedmont farmers were owners, and this occurred in only three counties. Afterwards the population of owner-operators in the Piedmont remained at about 30% (Orser 1988:60).

In 1884 the labor system of Greenville County was described as encompassing either cropping or a rent system:

> Where money is paid the terms, strictly speaking, are monthly payments, but the custom that prevails most generally is a running account, with settlement at the end of the year (The News and Courier 1884:n.p.).

The account continued by noting that the cost of cotton production was about $40 per 500 pound bale. There were about 200 gins operating in Greenville County and the distance cotton would be hauled to a gin never exceeded 1½ miles. The report indicated that freedmen engaged in agriculture "rarely make more than a bare support and in the end they get into debt and never pay out" (The News and Courier 1884:n.p.).

Orser notes that the period from 1880 to 1920 is one of consistent agricultural expansion, with a concomitant increase in cotton production. This trend, however, changed between 1920 and 1925, when both the number of farms and the cotton production dramatically decreased (Orser 1988:69). The causes of this reversal are at least two-fold: increasing Piedmont erosion and the introduction of the boll weevil (cf. Orser 1988:77).

Field Methods

The initially proposed field techniques involved a visual inspection of the survey areas exhibiting good surface visibility and the placement of occasional shovel tests in the tract to verify soil conditions and examine for erosion and disturbance. Additionally, areas of high archaeological probability (such as ridges adjacent to creeks) were shovel tested.

Should sites be identified by surface collection and/or shovel testing, further tests would be used to obtain data on site boundaries, artifact quantity and diversity, site integrity, and temporal affiliation. The information required for completion of the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology site forms would be collected and photographs would be taken, if warranted in the opinion of the field investigator.

All soil from the shovel tests would be screened through 1/4-inch mesh, with each test numbered sequentially. Each test would measure about 1 foot square and would normally be taken to a depth of at least 1 foot. All cultural remains would be collected, except for shell, mortar, and brick, which would be quantitatively noted in the field and discarded. Notes would be maintained for profiles at any sites encountered.

A total of 34 shovel tests were excavated in the project area (Figure 2).

## Curation

It is anticipated that field notes will be accessioned for curation at the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology. Field notes have been prepared for curation using archival standards and will be transferred to the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology as soon as the project is complete.

## Results

The archaeological reconnaissance identified no archaeological sites in the study area. Worth brief mention is the remains of a house site area just west of S.C. 253 across from Pebble Creek Drive. A hard, portland cement mortared cut stone wall measuring approximately 75 feet in length was found in this area. Atop the wall in the grass is a shin high wire garden-type fence. Also lying around the area were old car parts (e.g. tail pipe and muffler). Nine shovel tests were placed in this area with none yielding artifactual remains. No surface finds were collected. This area of the tract contained thick undergrowth which restricted visual observations. No above ground remains were seen during the shovel testing.

## Summary and Conclusions

As a result of the archaeological reconnaissance of the Pebble Creek Golf Course tract, no sites were identified. A large portion of the study tract contained slope areas. Hill tops and ridges adjacent to streams were examined with shovel tests. No sites were encountered. While this study only represent reconnaissance level investigation, no evidence of archaeological sites were encountered. With the examination of what are traditionally considered high probability areas producing no evidence of archaeological remains, it is believed that the tract is unlikely to contain any significant cultural resources.

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